1: Herskovits E-4, 5 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3

[History of Haiti in 17th-18th Centuries—
The Haitian White population]

175 563 565 369 [463] planters and expressing their contempt for the townspeople, speaks of the towns as existing primarily to serve the needs of these country squires as centers for the storage and disposal of their produce: "There are found merchants, artisans, judges, recorders, solicitors, notaries, bailiffs, doctors. But one finds neither nobles, men of property, nor persons of wit and perception." [16]

175 324 563 The physical aspect of the cities had little to recommend them, especially since the utter lack of sanitation made for extreme uncleanliness in all Haitian centers. This fact is of special interest in the light of the frequent references to this trait of Haitian cities in the writings of those Europeans who described the life of independent Haiti. Invariably in such accounts the littered state of the streets, even in the capital, is stressed, and tendered as evidence of the absence of civilization in this Negro Republic.[17] Even though occasional mention is made that this state of affairs existed before the Revolution, nowhere, whether in St. John or in the later writers who date from the time of the occupation of the country by the United States Marine Corps, is there any realization that this condition antedates the independence of Haiti. The cleanliness of Africans in Africa wherever the natives have ready access to water has been well attested, and is still true in those regions from which the ancestors of the people of Haiti principally derive.

175 591 368 563 Yet some aspects of life in the towns livened the picture of Haitian colonial existence. Outstanding were the opportunities offered by these centers for social intercourse, and even for intellectual and artistic stimulation of a kind, such as was afforded by the famous *Cercle des Philadelphes* of Cap Française, dedicated to literary, philosophical, and, above all, to political discussions.[18] Masonic lodges, later taken over by the Negroes and today of appreciable importance in Haiti, were also instituted by the French, the first having been founded at the Cap in 1740.[19] Purely social meeting-places, such as public

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Mirebalais

While farming and marketing are by far the most widespread occupations, it must not be concluded that all specialization of economic function is lacking. The list of those in the *arrondissement* of Mirebalais who in 1934 paid license fees gives a comprehensive picture of the varied nature of their occupations:

2 justices of the peace	2 mattress-makers
2 notaries	2 ironworkers who repair the caldrons for boiling sugar
5 "pleaders" before the courts	15 bakers
1 doctor	21 butchers
6 surveyors	23 distillers
4 woodworkers	4 millers
48 carpenters	1 hairdresser
12 sawyers	4 jewelers
40 masons	2 general storekeepers
14 tailors	43 venders of notions in the market place
3 dressmakers	16 peddlers
4 shoemakers	

Sex division of labor cuts across these categories. Thus the baking of bread is in the hands of women, some of whom operate ovens of considerable capacity, and women are dressmakers and laundresses. Candles are made of beeswax by old women, but the cotton that is used for the wicks, or for hammocks or fish-nets or cinches of saddles, is spun by both elderly men and women. In the main, however, the rule is that manual labor outside the house is in the hands of men, while women are the housekeepers and tradespeople. Farming has been mentioned as an occupation primarily for men. All woodworking is done by men, who make furniture and fashion the dugout canoes used on the Haitian rivers; men also do basketry and weave straw hats; leather-working is in their hands as well, and they make shoes and saddles. No pottery is

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manufactured in the valley of Mirebalais, but elsewhere in Haiti men are the potters. The African knowledge of iron-working has been lost, but there are those who repair iron implements and the great pots used in making sugar, and those who work in tin. Some men specialize in making rope, others in building the mills which crush the sugar-cane. Not everyone knows how to make *clairin*, the strong drink of the peasants, and some do nothing except distill this. Painters are found who paint the larger houses built in the town, as well as those occasionally erected by the more prosperous peasants in the countryside. The calling of the mason is a well-established one. These craftsmen build the walls of the more pretentious stone houses, but more particularly find their time taken up in the erection of tombs.

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With economic specialization goes a stratification of Haitian society, roughly drawn, but based on prestige and the command of economic resources, in which the following classes are informally recognized: There are the *pauvres*, indigent folk, who for some reason have forfeited or otherwise lost their family connections and whatever they may have owned and now must actually beg to obtain enough to eat. One finds but few of these except in the larger centers; in Mirebalais they number not more than five or six. One such is an elderly man who originally came from another part of the island, lost what he owned, and when he became deaf was no longer able to earn a living. He was occasionally set at some menial task such as carrying water or gathering firewood. In another category are those known as *malheureux* — folk who are usually, though not always, incompetent, but who are generally regarded as unlucky. They may work hard on their land, but their crops fail or yield meagerly; they may obtain a *job*, but something goes wrong with it — the work is temporary, or they cannot collect the wages due them, or illness follows every period of employment.[19]

The second group comprises the middle class. This class

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any usual measure. But Haitians do produce by traditional craft methods a surprisingly large number of the articles they need for daily life. In the countryside it is possible to see many persons engaged, mostly on a part-time basis, in craft activities and home industry that have their roots in the prerevolutionary era. Leatherworkers operating small, crude tanneries still flourish. Charcoal-burners, and operators of small lime kilns that produce building material, are found in every village. Smiths make and repair simple tools, working with forges of archaic design. Combs are made from cows' horns and tortoiseshell, buttons from bone; carrying-bags, fish traps, and a wide variety of baskets from withes, bamboo strips, and grasses; wooden bowls, mortars and pestles, tool handles and spoons from local woods; dippers, pots, and candelabra from tin cans; and sandals from tires and inner tubes. Sawyers cut and dress timber; cabinetmakers still manufacture simple furniture of traditional design from the fast-disappearing tropical woods; many women, working either with the simplest sorts of sewing machines or by hand, make clothing for use and for sale. Along the coasts there are dugout-makers, shipbuilders, and sail- and seine-makers. Simple mattresses, fabricated from local grasses, are sold in every large marketplace, as are crude ceramic wares made by local potters. At the start of the twentieth century, Italian immigrants brought a sturdy tradition of cobbling to Haiti, which has been destroyed only recently by the flood of American imported shoes with their attached prestige, until recently, *vitièlo* was a colloquial term for shoe, coming from the name of the most famous of those Italian cobblers.

One of the striking features of Haiti's craft traditions is its relative stability since the revolution. It was under slavery that Haitians first became "westernized," learning what were then standard French craft practices, adjusted to local colonial conditions, probably with some modifying features coming from the African past. It was before the revolution that the Haitian people learned and stabilized their consumer tastes, agricultural and craft standards, and work procedures. Such preferences and standards were worked out primarily in terms of the demands of the plantation regime itself; but even the most repressive social system leaves some opportunity for acculturation. Today's sugar-making shops and rural rum distilleries employ techniques centuries old and little modified over time. Housebuilding and woodworking techniques in the countryside are substantially

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unchanged from an earlier era. The prevailing quality of Haitian rural and craft industry, then, is one of great stability and conservatism.

At the same time, of course, major events since the revolution have left their imprint on this part of life. Hardly a roadside village in Haiti today, for instance, lacks an automobile mechanic, even though these men are mostly self-educated and work with hardly any tools. Their skills became part of Haitian culture in this century and are often of a simple order no longer typical of more developed areas. Tire tubes, for instance, are "vulcanized" by the use of an ingenious device made from a board and an old piston, kerosene providing the heat to make the seal; this technique, along with the sewing of damaged truck tires, was almost certainly introduced and diffused by the United States Marines.

But these quaint additions do not alter the fact that shop and factory industry are nearly absent, and extractive industry virtually nonexistent. Haiti's one alumina extraction enterprise, foreign-owned, is now shut down. There is but one flour mill, and that is foreign-owned as well. One or two textile mills and sugar factories, established with foreign capital, still function, as do a modern cement factory and a few other small plants established in the 1950s. These industries, scanty as they are, were of great importance to Haiti, since they represented substantial investments, held out the promise of reduced dependence on imports in significant categories, and contributed to the beginnings of an industrial proletariat. However, they involved only a tiny fraction of the national labor force, and they have not proved entirely successful. As a result, Haiti lacks any reserve of labor acquainted with modern industry, even though many people, both urban and rural, work at tasks that might be considered more industrial than agricultural.

Most important for the present discussion, the minor developments in Haitian industry have not led to an expanded market and have not resulted in any firm increase in productivity. Industrial growth, in the sense in which it has occurred in countries such as those of Western Europe—or for that matter in Mexico or Argentina—is entirely lacking. The absence of such growth is perhaps especially significant if Haiti be compared with a neighbor such as Jamaica or Puerto Rico. These countries, one now independent, the other a North American dependency—have both gained real increments from the investment activities of outsiders,

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intrepidity in enterprise is required. It is striking that those foreign captains of industry—mainly from the United States—who invest in Haiti, expect (and often get) governmental guarantees of a sort they could not dream of in their own countries; in this regard, they merely conform to Haitian expectations.

Haiti's problems, then, are not simply those that face any less developed country, vast though such problems may be. Nor is it intelligent to lay Haiti's problems at the feet of the nation's present rulers. The structure of the national economy has not changed significantly during the past twenty-five years—except that boom years could provide a temporary aura of prosperity—regardless of the philosophy or popularity of the regime in power. If nothing else, the present nadir of Haiti's fortunes demonstrates that United States aid averaging twelve and a half million dollars yearly over more than a decade has produced no enduring improvements of any kind. It may further demonstrate that, shockingly poor as the country is, it emphatically does not depend on such aid. As of 1964, the regime in power was operating on a monthly budget of $1,800,000, only $400,000 of which went for purposes other than salaries. In other words, the ministries do little more than perpetuate themselves unchanged. The yeomanry, living near subsistence level, continues to produce most of what it needs, while restricting its cash expenditures even more severely than in the past. The risks—in terms, say, of public health—of running a society under these circumstances are great; but there is no reason to suppose that regimes of the Haitian sort will be destroyed or improved by a show of popular unrest originating in the countryside. Difficult as life is for the Haitian countryman, and no people in Latin America lives more poorly, the real pinch is probably being experienced more acutely among the city folk than among their rural fellow citizens. It matters politically, therefore, who these city folk are and what they do.

To begin with, there has been a significant loss of professional people, almost all of whom were urban, through migration and exile, especially since 1958. Haitian doctors, dentists, and other professionals are widely scattered today, both in the developed and the less developed countries of the world. Former army officers, journalists, diplomats, businessmen, and academicians have fled political repression, perhaps with the hope of eventually returning to their own country.

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565 *caste* is the only word to describe the effective separation of aristocrats from the masses. The caste system is a vivid fact, for it regulates a person's profession, speech, religion, marriage, family life, politics, clothes, social mobility—in short, his whole life from cradle to grave.

175 Haiti won its freedom from the France of Napoleon in 1804,
648 becoming thus the second independent state in the Western Hemisphere. It had been during the eighteenth century France's most prosperous colony, its wealth depending upon slavery and the plantation system. With the whites driven out, social distinctions which
565 actually had their roots in colonial times began immediately to
642 develop among the people, all of whom had some proportion of African blood in their veins. During the course of the next century the criteria for aristocracy slowly assumed recognizable form, so that now even the most casual observer is aware that Haiti cannot by any stretch of the imagination be called a democratic country, with an open class system. The two castes are the élite and the masses. They are as different as day from night, as nobleman from peasant; and they are as separate as oil and water. The élite are generally reckoned
[162] to compose at the outside not more than three per cent of the population.

565 The élite do not work with their hands. This is the cardinal rule of Haitian society. Upon it rests the whole economic structure of the
● 463 country, and to this the course of national history has led. All the
[461] professions, most governmental and military offices, and the large business enterprises are effectively closed to young men of the masses. Indeed, so completely accepted are caste rules, so practically difficult would it be for peasant youths to acquire the money and education necessary for such careers, that at birth a boy's future place in economic life is, within narrow limits, already predetermined. For the élite, law is the most popular of the professions, partly because it is the quickest avenue of approach to high political office; government, in turn, is the only career which can make a man rich within a few years. Next in popularity to law comes medicine. Teaching is not lucrative enough to attract many promising youths, and the priests of the Roman Catholic Church are almost all white Frenchmen.[2]

793 2. An effort was once made by the Catholic Church to train native Haitian priests,
797 but the peasants would have none of them after they were ordained. They drove them out, saying, "Go away! How do you expect God to listen to you? You are not white; you don't know anything." And the Haitian priests had to be transferred as missionaries to Africa.

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Modern usage, having borrowed the word "caste" from India, employs it loosely to mean a rigid class system of which the people are conscious.[4] In India caste was always endogamous and connected with occupation. Kroeber defines it as "an endogamous and hereditary division of an ethnic unit occupying a position of superior or inferior rank or social esteem in comparison with other such subdivisions."[5] Castes, as distinguished from social classes, "have emerged into social consciousness to the point where custom and law attempt their rigid and permanent separation from one another." By each of these criteria Haiti has castes.

The élite are endogamous in that they would not consider marriage into the masses. The one exception to the endogamic practice is marriage with a white foreigner. Whereas in India all members of a caste had the same general occupation, in Haiti several occupations are open to caste members; but the distinction between honorable and demeaning work is understood by all, so that no person has free choice as regards the two larger categories. Haitian law does not name the social divisions, nor does it legislate the masses into a subordinate position[6]—for the simple reason that there is no conceivable need to enact what already exists. The laws of Haiti are administered by élite officials; these men make the definitions and interpretations. The judge always knows the custom, so that (as in most countries) the same offense brings different penalties for upper- and lower-class offenders. Custom holds sway, and custom is more tyrannical than any body of law.

Inside the castes may be found social distinctions familiar in democracies and in every other kind of society. Interest in politics, business, literature, or sport draws people of like minds together and makes cliques. There are well-to-do families who outshine their neighbors, just as there are peasant landholders who dominate their rural communities. A high civil official has more prestige than a doctor with a small practice, just as among the masses a house servant for an élite family outranks a beggar.

For the majority of Haitians, life is too elemental to be concerned with artificial wants. The peasant talks, unfettered by rules of gram-

4. See also W. Lloyd Warner, "American Caste and Class," *American Journal of Sociology*, XLII, No. 2 (Sept. 1936), 234–237; and John Dollard, *Caste and Class in a Southern Town* (New Haven, 1937), pp. 62 ff.

5. A. L. Kroeber, "Caste," in *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, III, 254.

6. Such efforts were made, however, in the early days of the republic. See chap. III.

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two. Here was a decline of about 150,000 from 1790.[2] It is a commentary on the man's forcefulness that in spite of all difficulties Dessalines established an effective economic organization. Its basis was serfdom.

Every citizen, he announced, must consider himself in one of two categories, laborer or soldier. There were to be no shirkers in the new Haiti; if a man was not in the army, he must do manual labor. Artisans who followed a craft counted as laborers. Women, since they could not join the army, must work shoulder to shoulder with their men. It was understood that direction of Haiti's new order would be carried on by state officials who were neither laborers nor soldiers, but these officials were to be so few that they would not constitute a separate third category.

This step of Dessalines' was a radical one. It proclaimed the mastery of state over individual; and even more significantly it divided the people according to economic task, rather than birth, wealth, color, or social status. At first the more ambitious citizens bore patiently with the arbitrary decree, thinking they might be able to achieve comfortable status under a lenient definition of "soldier" or else by sinecure tasks as officials. Their disillusionment was swift. Even swifter was the chagrin of the lowly folk who had been slaves, for they found themselves now in actual bondage to one of their own color.

All people except soldiers, ran the decree, must be "attached as cultivators to a plantation." This might be translated to read "bound to the soil." The vast majority of the people were forced willy-nilly into agriculture. It was "formally prohibited for a cultivator to desert the plantation to which he was assigned"; conversely, it was a crime to give asylum to a runaway cultivator, male or female.[3] If such conditions differed from slavery, they were at least close to what the mediaeval world knew as serfdom. But under this régime of forced labor the recently ravaged fields once more became productive: cotton plantations again covered the plain of the Artibonite, and sugar refineries were slowly rebuilt all over the country.

To forestall complaint from the people once again driven into

2. See, for an analysis of population figures, Placide Justin, *Histoire politique et statistique de l'Ile d'Hayti, Saint-Domingue* (Paris, 1826), pp. 502–503.

3. A certain Mlle. Chapotin, of respectable family, was accused of having harbored a fugitive female cultivator, and, since she was unable to pay immediately the fine imposed upon her by the police at Port-au-Prince, she was condemned to serve a jail term.

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field labor, the ruler emphasized the clemency of his new régime. Labor the people must, but not under the whip; that arch symbol of slavery was abolished forever. The working day was shortened by a third. It was provided that, if just reason were shown, a man might even secure permission from his district commissioner to move from the plantation to which he was attached.

These were words. Facts were another matter. The overseers had been ordered to exact so much labor from their underlings, yet without whips; knowing no persuading power other than chastisement, they backed up their commands with blows of *lianes*, thick pliable vines which could be gathered anywhere in the island. Thus the laggard was driven, the law kept to the letter, and the overseer praised by his superiors. As for the working day, crops must be tended at the proper moment, so that the boasted shortening of hours generally came to little. Finally, the right to secure permission to move away from a plantation was effectively limited by the refusal of commissioners to grant any such request.

Every public expression of Dessalines showed a solicitude for the welfare of the workers, while his every act indicated that he regarded them as impersonal parts of the machine of state. He knew by his own former experience as a slave what a day's stint should be and the ruses used by laborers to avoid steady work; he was therefore able to order agricultural labor on a realistic basis.

The economic organization created by Dessalines provided the roots for the peasantry which was soon to develop as a characteristic form of Haitian life. Among these fundamental conditions were the existence of agriculture as a prevalent occupation, the immobility of all workers on the land, and a thorough schooling of the people in patient acceptance. Dessalines might theoretically have established some other economic system—a division of estates into small properties, for example, with each farmer a master of his own destiny; a democratic coöperative economy; slavery again; feudalism with a landed gentry. At critical times, one leader's choice may affect the whole future life of the country. The decision of Dessalines to keep the bulk of his people in servitude, without using the terminology of slavery, gave the new freemen no opportunity to become acquainted with work other than tillage. They were sent back to the only tasks they had ever known, their horizons were just as limited as before, their personal freedom just as restricted. The worst punishments of slavery, together with torture and gross overwork,

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were abolished; with such concessions the people must be satisfied. Dessalines tacitly confessed his inability to follow any course but the French colonial system, with modifications introduced by Toussaint.

Many of the blacks, having tasted a moment's freedom, were not inclined to give it up. Before the new order of Dessalines was firmly established, therefore, they ran away with their families into the hills, where they escaped official notice. As squatters they lived out their lives unmolested. By the time they were officially rediscovered, all Haiti had become a land of peasants.

At the other end of the ladder from the laborers were the officials, who might be great men or small clerks, members of the entourage of the governor-general or merely overseers of a plantation. In order to keep the vast agricultural economy functioning smoothly it was necessary to have hundreds of agents, directors, clerks, and overseers, each of whom must report to a superior. In this official class there was at least a possibility of realizing an ambition for oneself; there was a basis of comparison; more important, there was some possibility of attracting favorable attention of persons in high places and so of gaining promotion. Inevitably something of the colonial state of mind must have carried over into the new era, so that an ex-slave would consider himself as having risen in the world to be now performing a task which only white men used to do—to be spared field labor and to direct the work of others. Out of this group of petty agents rose a few men of ambition who were later to belong to the élite.

Higher officers of state were in a much more favorable position to achieve social eminence. Not only did they perform no manual labor; they were twice removed from that life, since they directed the men who directed the workers. They handled funds. They came into contact with Dessalines himself. Many former gens de couleur filled these important posts, for the number of Haitians who could read and write was woefully limited.

The army was the great power in the country, for the new state was a military one. Since fear of a return of the French required the maintenance of a large standing army,[4] Dessalines made a virtue of this apparent necessity, using his soldiers to enforce discipline among the cultivators. On whom else could he rely for his local administration

4. Humboldt estimated that the army of Dessalines numbered 37,300, which would be one tenth of the total population. Other estimates run as low as 15,000. Even this figure would be about a tenth of the male population.

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tion? Here again, the decision of a leader fixed the direction of Haitian life for decades to come. It is agreed by commentators that overmilitarization was the bane of nineteenth-century Haiti. One tenth of all able-bodied men were constantly in active army service. Moreover, all the male cultivators on plantations must hold themselves in readiness to obey the government's call to arms; ammunition and arms were stored in every parish. A military mentality was nourished, the people early learning the lesson (apparently unchallenged by any liberal) that the army should rule and the people obey.

Although the common soldiers were ex-slaves who, upon dismissal from service, would return to the ranks of agricultural workers, their officers had a higher status. Noncommissioned officers had a long road to travel to eminence, but like the overseers they had at least a glimpse of the promised land of distinction. Captains and generals had this vision within their grasp: they were already of the élite.

In the subcategory of "artisans" were included all the townspeople who carried on crafts or trades. It must be remembered that Haiti had no cities, and that its two largest towns then numbered probably no more than 10,000 people each, so that artisans were not numerous. Since there was a distinction in the arduousness of various pursuits as well as in their financial return there existed in this category, as in the official and military, some chance for social prestige.

The only persons remaining outside the categories mentioned were colored landowners who had held estates in the colonial period. Dessalines took active steps to gain control of most of the land in the country, but at his death in 1806 there were still many of the old proprietors left who were, in the main, determined to hold their land and preserve their dignity as non-laborers.

Assassination by his political foes ended the career of Dessalines only two years after he assumed power. In 1805 he had had himself crowned emperor in imitation of Napoleon, but unlike Napoleon he permitted no nobility. "*Moi seul, je suis noble!*" he replied to ambitious henchmen who asked for the establishment of a peerage. It was the Emperor's tactless handling of the social situation which caused his murder, for he touched sensitive nerves on the raw in attacking property rights, inherited privilege, color distinctions, and social aspirations. The cultivators grumblingly accepted his decrees; the ambitious upper group did not.

The former affranchis fully intended to keep their lands once the

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he could save or borrow the money, buy a small patch and become a freeholder in his own right. And in the mountains, if one were willing to endure isolation, one could get much land by squatter's claim.

A vivid indication of the declining economic condition of the country will be found in the actual scale of real-estate prices. In the eighteen-twenties the finest land in the republic did not sell for more than $60 an acre, even when contiguous to a port for shipping or extremely fertile. Such a price would have been ridiculous in the days of the French colony. Farms in the plains and mountains, suitable for cocoa and cotton, could be had in Boyer's time for $20 or $30 an acre in any quantity from ten to five hundred acres. In the rich Artibonite Valley small plots for horticultural purposes sold for $40 an acre; indigo and cotton land rarely brought over $30; and a complete cotton plantation which had borne richly in colonial days sold for from $12 to $20 an acre. In the North, despite its fertility and more careful cultivation under Christophe, land seldom brought more than $40 or $45, while pasture lands could scarcely find purchasers at $40. A lot in Port-au-Prince with a frontage of sixty feet and a depth of fifty, well situated for trading purposes, brought only $200.[50] Fifteen years later even these prices were fantastically high, for by then no one was wealthy enough to purchase an estate.

5. *Lapse into Peasantry (1827–1843)*

"Peasant" is one of those words whose meaning everyone knows yet whose definition is never precise. It clearly carries the connotation of farming the land by conservative, generally uneducated, persons whose families have for generations lived on the same plot of earth without any great ambition to move away or change their economic lot. It means small ownership. And most particularly it means a comparatively low social status, for we think of peasantry as existing only in those countries which have a clear-cut social class system, with a stratification which would make it difficult for a person to move from one class to another. His land is to the peasant both home and living; his household is dependent almost solely upon the product of its own labor. He is generally conceived to be too complacent, if not too ignorant or too dull, to take advantage of commercial opportunities which might bring him wealth. "It is increasingly

50. These figures for 1824–28 are from Franklin, *op. cit.*, p. 314.

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recognized that the really important characteristics peculiar to the peasant are his sentiments and attitudes, the intense attachment to his native soil and family tradition, which, even in the economic sphere, take precedence over the desire for individual advancement and gain."[51]

Haiti in 1804 was still a country of large estates, and Dessalines and Christophe strove to keep it so. Under the active generosity of Pétion and the passive indifference of Boyer after his Code Rural had failed, few great plantations were left intact. The recorded donations of these two presidents to their generals, civil functionaries, and lesser officers, are as follows:[52]

134 grants of 150 carreaux (about 450 acres).			Total: 59,300 acres.
176	35	105	18,480
639	30	90	57,510
711	25	75	54,325
2,322	20	60	139,320
8,000	5	15	120,000

Grand total: 448,935 acres.

Haiti followed French law rather than British, so that the rule of primogeniture did not prevail. It requires only a moment's reflection to see that even within a single generation the thousands of small properties noted in the table would be subdivided many times, since a father apportioned his land to all his sons. By 1842 it is probable that not a single plantation of the size common in colonial times was still intact.[53] On the testimony of numerous government officials and commandants of arrondissements, it was estimated in that year that 46,610 small landed properties were under fair cultivation.[54] If the population at that time be estimated at 800,000, seven eighths of whom were engaged in agriculture, there would accordingly be about fifteen people (including children) to each rural property. But

A large number of small estates are left out of this account, which are said to be *badly* cultivated, or neglected. Taking the number of each separate

51. C. von Dietze, "Peasantry," in *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, XII, 50.

52. This table is compiled from figures cited in Armand Thoby, *La Question agraire en Haïti* (Port-au-Prince, 1888), *passim*, and Dr. F. Dalencour, *Le Sauvetage national par le retour à la terre* (Port-au-Prince, 1923), p. 18.

53. See Raymond Renaud, *Le Régime foncier en Haïti* (Paris, 1934), pp. 42–45.

54. Candler, *op. cit.*, p. 122.

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unplanned, undesired
Haitian peasantry, to sum up, began as the result of two policies intended to achieve ends quite different; first, presidential gifts of land, the chief purpose of which had been to pay the soldiers of the republic; and second, the crop-sharing system adopted by landlords after the failure of Boyer's Code.

6. *The Drawing of Caste Lines (1820–1843)*

Almost every major presidential aim of Boyer came to grief. His tranquil quarter-century rule, the unified island, the financial surplus with which his presidency began, the peace with France after 1825—all these advantages combined with his good intentions did not save his projects from shipwreck. Near the beginning of his régime he announced that, like his revered predecessor Pétion, he felt the safety of Haiti to lie in the abolition of all color distinctions and prejudices. Just as his great Code Rural proved a complete failure, however, so did his efforts to do away with the color line. On the contrary, it was during Boyer's time that class distinctions became fixed, in large part although not wholly, on the basis of color.

Stating that the policy of his government was to put an end, as far as possible, to jealousies of caste, he consistently for a few years promoted a black every time a promotion had been given to a mulatto or other light-skinned person. This procedure soon met an insuperable obstacle. Government posts in general required literacy, and only a very small number of blacks were educated, so that the supply of Negroes was not sufficient to furnish him with candidates. Since one of the few roads to lucrative success lay in official positions, ambitious young colored men sought eagerly for government office, and Boyer soon had no alternative but to advance men of his own complexion. In the army, on the other hand, literacy was not necessary for promotion. Ambitious Negro youths, therefore, frequently chose this career which, while not very profitable in monetary rewards, at least gave a man a certain social status and economic security.

Because of the state of education in the republic, consequently, an ugly situation developed, with the civil arm of government almost wholly in control of the colored element and the military force dominated by blacks. Fortunately for the country no crisis developed during the 1820's and 1830's which made an open breach between army and state. [563]

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of the parish church to which each party belongs, and no ceremony may be performed by a priest without the presentation of the certificate of the civil marriage.

According to the legal code, as well as actual practice of the upper classes, woman is man's definite inferior in rights.[7] The Haitian code follows closely that of Napoleon, and both conform in general to practice common among substantial people in the Haiti and France of the early nineteenth century. Spouses equally owe to each other fidelity, succor, and assistance; the husband owes protection to his wife, the wife obedience to her husband. Although the wife must live with her husband wherever he chooses, he conversely must receive her when she comes to live with him, and must provide food for her. No wife may purchase, sell, give, or otherwise alienate property without the consent of her husband; moreover, the husband alone has the administration of goods coming in the dowry, so long as the union endures.

The modern movement for women's rights has hardly touched Haiti.[8] Women may not vote, nor may they hold public office. Among the élite, in theory and in practice woman's place is in the home, caring for the household and the children. One might imagine himself in provincial France as he sees the daily life of upper-class Haitian women: the ordering of meals, directing of servants, sewing, shopping, visiting, party going, occasional novel reading, driving in the family car. Different from French practice, however, is the taboo against most manual labor: this is the task of servants only. The élite housewife may cook but not sweep, sew but not launder, bargain with a huckster but not carry home her purchases. A woman of the upper classes would demean herself to enter business. Since the American Occupation, as a matter of fact, a few women have been daring enough to become secretaries and stenographers, but there seems to be nothing like a concerted movement for the "emancipation" of élite women. There are schools for girls, but these do not reach as far as the schools for boys; women are not admitted to the law school or medical school, for a woman lawyer or doctor would be unthinkable in Haitian society.

7. See Louis Borno, *Code civil d'Haïti annoté* (Port-au-Prince, 1892), chap. VI, articles 196–201.

8. See, however, Madeleine G. Sylvain, "The Feminist Movement in Haiti," *Bulletin of the Pan-American Union*, LXXIII, No. 6 (June, 1939), 315–321.

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114 consider it novel when it changes little but detail; and some of Haiti's
175 seventeen documents were too short-lived to be significant. Haiti
642 shows her Frenchness in this constitution making, this love of being
171 logical and having the details all written down in proper order.

To try to analyze the content of so many documents would be a
175 work of supererogation.[5] A brief comment upon each, however, will improve one's acquaintance with the mind of Haitian statesmen.

175 1801. Toussaint L'Ouverture's constitution, laying the framework
642 of his venture as director of the colony while still acknowledging its
466 relationship to France. In it he announced himself governor-general for life with the right to name his successor, thereby becoming the forerunner of the strong-man principle in politics. The most important part of this constitution was its detailed organization of the forced-labor system.

175 1805. Dessalines' constitution establishing the empire. In many
642 respects it did not differ from Toussaint's previous document, for the
563 same military organization was preserved, and the same system of forced labor; otherwise, there was little structure of government. One article was included which was to appear in every other constitution of Haiti up to 1918: "No white man shall set foot on this territory as master or as landowner."[6] In other respects there were sagacious provisions which did not endure. For example, the generic name of "blacks" was adopted for all Haitians, of whatever color.
175 The Emperor was trying thus to forestall the dissensions which
642 inevitably must result from the growth of social classes based on skin
[463] color. Another important provision was that every citizen who was not an ordinary cultivator must learn and practice some mechanical art. This was not merely a thrust at the aristocratic pretensions of the old affranchis, but also an endeavor to make Haiti industrious and self-sufficient. Except in the North, where Dessalines' deputy Christophe kept the requirement, the article was honored only in the breach. The social situation was touched at one other point: "No one is worthy of being a Haitian who is not a good father, a good
[428] son, a good husband, and a good soldier." Parents were forbidden to disinherit their children. Although, as has been shown, the Emperor

5. Such an analysis was made by Louis-Joseph Janvier, *Les Constitutions d'Haïti, 1801–85* (Paris, 1886).

6. He had made this declaration first on April 28, 1804; at that time the words "No white man" read "No colonist nor European."